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Alison Downey
1201 Pembroke Ln
Newport Beach, CA 92660

April 29, 1994

Chairman Reed E. Hundt
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20554

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Dear Chairman Reed E. Hundt:

I'm a student that has taken interest in T.V. problems relating to children. Although it has been proven that some children react positively to T.V. violence; many do not. Unfortunately today many parents use the television as a medium to entertain or watch over their child.

I feel that because a great majority of children do watch television on a regular basis, that more steps should be taken in the development of childrens television.

Science the parent is in charge of the child, the parent should be informed. This means that house wives, business men and women, mail carriers and any one who plays the role of the parent should be made aware of childrens television shows. This can only be done by advertising programs on T.V. more frequently as well as, news paper articles and magazine articles. Making people aware of what is out there may be a small step but at least they could have more control on what the television is putting into their childrens minds.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Alison Downey

Alison Downey

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American Academy of Children's Entertainment

April 26, 1994

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Mr. Reed Hundt
ChairmanFederal Communications Commission
1919 "M" Street, N.W. - Room 814
Washington, DC 20554

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FCC MAIL ROOM

Dear Mr. Hundt,

Since the FCC plans to investigate compliance with the Children's Television Act and ways to improve the content of children's programming, I would like to add a perspective that you do not now have.

The American Academy of Children's Entertainment is a trade association made up of professional creative and performing talent in children's music, video, broadcasting, and publishing. (The enclosed newsletter will explain our mission and membership.)

We feel that there is one main reason why current programming does not properly serve our children:

The "media distributors" (television networks, major record labels, major retailers, etc.) are not hiring the proper talent!

Children's programming is erroneously considered "easy" to produce. Which means that a lot of the programming commissioned by the major distributors is produced by people with little expertise in education or children's entertainment. (Because someone has written for "Saturday Night Live" does not make him qualified to write for children.)

Professional writers for children know how to end a dramatic confrontation with a smile, and not with a punch in the nose!

They know -- beyond flashy special effects -- how to excite and get the attention of children, since they have studied and worked with them professionally for many years.

There is a vast, hugely successful, educational marketplace with major companies like Scholastic, Inc., producing videos, music, and other entertainment. But this marketplace is virtually ignored by the major media distributors!

Media distributors need to approach the producers and creative talent who already have successful track records in

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the educational market and get them to "cross-over" into the general market. (Educators can produce successful commercial fare. "Barney" the dinosaur is just one example.)

Parents and kids both know when something put in front of them is junk. But many of the producers and writers of the junk don't have the experience (of being a parent, or of working in the educational market) to recognize it themselves!

AACE has some suggestions for the major media distributors.

- 1) Hire experienced children's entertainment talent to write, produce, direct and perform in your children's programming. You'll find that your characters will start to throw more laughs than punches, and your ratings will grow.
- 2) Realize that good children's programming can win ratings and make a profit when it is aggressively marketed in the community and not just thrown out on the airwaves. PBS stations have, for years, been using special outreach programs in schools, day-care centers -- even prisons! -- to fortify their viewership.
- 3) Draw good ratings by using established local talent. There are many regional children's acts with large fan clubs, and who draw huge crowds to local concerts. A local market television station will profit with a home-grown approach.
- 4) Use your "adult programming development system" to develop and test children's programming. Finance multiple pilots and use your research departments. Broadcast a variety show for children as a way to discover and test talent.
- 5) Realize that children's entertainment cannot be retailed the same way adult entertainment is. When record and video shops learn how to sell children's product properly, everything sells -- not just the Disney tapes!

In the past, Congress and the FCC have made a point to listen to the concerns of parents and broadcasters. I hope that the perspective of the responsible children's entertainment professional can now be added to the debate.

Thank you for your time and attention. Please let me know if I can be of any further service.

Sincerely,



William G. Weber
President

children's entertainment business

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINMENT

Performers and Producers band together to form *American Academy of Children's Entertainment*

Prominent members of the children's entertainment industry -- including Shari Lewis, Fred Seibert (Hanna-Barbera Productions), Maurice Sendak, Paul Tripp, Joanie Bartels, John Burstein (Slim Goodbody), Michael Sporn, and Sharon, Lois & Bram -- have joined together to create the *American Academy of Children's Entertainment*, a non-profit association dedicated to the growth and prosperity of the children's entertainment business.

"While children's entertainment is one of the largest and fastest growing segments of entertainment," explains President Bill Weber, "there has been no organized entity doing for it what the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and other such groups do for their segments of the business."

"We need our own awards program. We need our own opportunities for professional growth. And we need to



promote the fact that the producers of children's entertainment are caring, responsible contributors to society."

According to many entertainment and business executives, the time for an organization like AACE has never been better.

"The Children's Television Act, the animation renaissance, and the coming new media explosion all offer incredible opportunities," says Mr. Weber. "AACE members will be among the first to benefit from all this change because we will have the connections, the talent, and the professional support in place."

AACE was incorporated as a New York State non-profit corporation in March 1993, and has applied for 501(c)3 tax-exempt status.

"Our first meetings were pretty passionate," adds Vice-President Ian Alterman. "AACE board members are very committed to the children that they serve. We want to make more high quality, responsible entertainment available to children. And to do that, we know that we have to work together."

"There are hundreds of small, independent producers of quality children's music, books, toys, and videos out there. And thousands of artists and performers. AACE members and the children we serve will both benefit when we create and sell our products better."

AACE's initial membership drive is now underway. Membership is open to all working professionals in the children's entertainment industry -- encompassing the performing arts, music, video, film, television, toys, museums and attractions. The annual fee is \$100.

For more information, contact Bill Weber at 212-473-3348 (in New York City) or 201-328-0204 (out of town).

You've been sent this newsletter...

due to your professional interest in children's entertainment. *Children's Entertainment Business* is just one of the projects of the American Academy of Children's Entertainment, a non profit association dedicated to the growth and prosperity of our business.

If you know someone who should also receive this newsletter, call us at 212 473 3348 or 201 328 0204.

AACE Leadership Circle

An organization with the scope and ambitions of AACE requires the support of many people. We'd like to take this opportunity to thank those who have generously supported -- and led -- AACE during its initial year.

The following individuals and companies, in particular, have made generous contributions

B+W Creative Group
Wallace Collins, Esq.
Elemenco Productions
One World Publicity

Plaza 3 Talent
The Poynor Group
Professor Putter Productions
Quintense Productions

Scholastic, Inc.
Craig Shemin
Silly Billy Productions
The Bill Weber Company



**THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINMENT™**
The Voice -- And Heart -- Of The
Children's Entertainment Industry™

A New York State Not-For Profit Corporation
P.O. Box 1257 - Cooper Station
New York, NY 10276
212-473-3348 Out of Town: 201-328-0204

Board of Advisors

Joanie Bartels, *Entertainer*
Rick Bloom, *Kindertainment*
John Burstein, *Slim Good Body, Inc.*
Martha W. Cramer, *Cramer Consultants*
Martha Dewing, *Children's Video Report*
David I. Friedman, *Silly Billy Productions*
Lindsay Gambini, *Tribeca Performing Arts Center*
Jack Godler, *Jack Godler Associates*
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Sharon Hampson, *Lois Lilienstein Bram Morrison, Elephant Records*
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Weber Company.

AACE Update: Seeds Planted in 1993 To Bear Fruit in 1994

The Executive Committee and the Board of Advisors have all been very busy laying the groundwork for AACE projects and programs.

Meetings have been held every other month for the past year. Out of these meetings has come a shared vision of what AACE can and should do, along with an ambitious slate of projects. Members will be meeting in small sub-committees for the next few months, and will report to the general membership in the spring.

The following is a brief progress report. The organization hopes it inspires even more members to get involved.

Membership

Board members have been attending music, tv, and film industry events, armed with brochures and their commitment to quality children's entertainment. Until a formal membership solicitation package is developed, the newsletter will be used to introduce AACE to prospective members. As AACE plans to create the authoritative database of people in the field of children's entertainment, it is important that members open up their rolodexes and help the organization reach out.

Public Relations

In addition to generally raising the profile of the children's entertainment industry and the professionals who are at the heart of it, AACE wants to put the conspicuously-absent voice of those professionals into the current public debate over entertainment violence and the educational and moral content of children's programming.

To that end, PR committee members are planning a creative and effective campaign.

AACE Awards

AACE is planning to create an industrywide, televised awards presentation. Chairperson Martha Dewing (publisher of *Children's Video Report*) and committee are studying the ways that an awards program can -- and should -- be structured.

AACE will hold its first awards ceremony in 1995, and is seeking a production company and on-air commitment for this event

Children's Entertainment Hall of Fame

Bette Korman, founder of the prestigious Children's Museum of Manhattan, has graciously offered her advice and experience in the creation of a Hall of Fame museum. AACE hopes to break ground on the museum in 1996.

Major Projects Need Major Partners

AACE has an ambitious slate of projects in development, and needs equally ambitious partners.

To help with the following projects, please call AACE President Bill Weber at 212-473-3348 (in New York) or 201-328-0204 (out of town).

American Academy of Children's Entertainment Awards™

AACE needs a production company and on-air commitment.

Sweet Dreams, Sweet World™ Book Project

AACE needs a book publisher and a television/video production company.

Children's Entertainment Hall of Fame™

AACE's museum project needs a real estate expert to advise us concerning site selection.

Kids Aid™

A television production partner and an on-air commitment are needed.

Public Service

Many ideas are being floated, some of which are already in the works. Two specific promising projects have emerged. The first is *Kids Aid*, a planned live annual event in the tradition of *Live Aid* and *Comic Relief*, to benefit children's charities worldwide.

The other is *Sweet Dreams, Sweet World*™, a book of bedtime stories and songs to benefit The Children's Health Fund, a national charity that provides free medical care to children in disadvantaged neighborhoods. AACE already has commitments from Paul Simon, Joanie Bartels, Paul Tripp and Shari Lewis, among others, to contribute to the book. AACE would be interested in speaking with publishers and producers to develop both the book and a possible television special and video.

Seminars

Beginning in late 1994, AACE seminars will address various topics of interest to the industry. Topics will include law and licensing; promotion and public relations; and morality, education and violence in children's programming. We also expect to hold occasional celebrity-based seminars.

Annual Benefit Event

AACE intends to hold at least one very high-profile charity event each year to benefit children's charities. We are currently planning our first event -- a unique and special concert -- for early 1995.

Support AACE by Advertising Here!

Call 212-473-3348
or 201-328-0204

Production Partner Wanted

The Bill Weber Company, with a successful track record in children's magazine and book publishing, is looking for an established television production company to jointly produce and sell the following television concepts:

Ingenuity!

A live action, science game show for television.

This hi-tech-minded game show, aimed at ages 6-10, combines aspects of "Carmen Sandiego" with "The Liars Club," "Double Dare," and "The Price Is Right." The show is hosted by Professor Putter, a nationally-known children's entertainment personality.

Contestants use the powers of observation, deduction, scientific analysis, and logic in pursuit of knowledge and prizes.



Ambassador Bird & Friends

An animated adventure series for television.

Finally - a real hero for young children!

Ambassador Bird is a dove who lives in the park outside the United Nations Building in New York City. He and his friends, the Ambassador Animals, help people in need around the world by promoting community activism and communication (not violence and confrontation) as solutions.

The story of how Ambassador Bird became a symbol of peace and international cooperation is also being developed as a feature-length animated musical.

**Contact Bill Weber,
President and Creative Director
The Bill Weber Company
212-473-3348/201-328-0204**

Bill Weber

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Join the Exciting Future of Children's Entertainment - Join AACE!

Our Mission

The American Academy of Children's Entertainment™ was created to:

- provide professionals in the children's entertainment industry with educational and networking opportunities,
- present a unified voice to the entertainment industry and the general public,
- demonstrate the industry's appreciation of and commitment to children, and
- promote excellence by encouraging and rewarding quality children's entertainment.

As a non-profit advocacy, support and outreach organization, AACE intends to involve itself in many aspects of the children's entertainment industry. The following are some of the ways in which AACE will carry out its mission.

The American Academy of Children's Entertainment Awards

AACE is developing a major industry-wide awards program and annual televised awards ceremony.

AACE members will honor their peers in the wide-ranging fields of children's entertainment, including toys, museums, amusements, film, literature, television, music, video and live performance.

Public Relations

Children's entertainment is the largest and fastest growing segment of the entertainment industry. Yet, industry members do not enjoy the profile and stature due their accomplishments. AACE's comprehensive public relations campaign will promote AACE members and projects as responsible, quality contributors to children and society.

Seminars

AACE will produce seminars on issues of interest to the field including law and licensing; promotion and public relations; and ethics, morality and violence.

Periodic networking events will provide AACE members the opportunity to share knowledge and make professional contacts.

The Children's Entertainment Hall Of Fame™

AACE will build a museum to honor industry stars -- both on-stage and behind the scenes -- and educate future generations about the important contributions that children's entertainment has made to society.

The museum, to be located in a major United States resort area, will create traveling exhibitions to introduce our magic to children around the world.

Publications

AACE's magazine, *Children's Entertainment Business*™, will contain articles, opportunities, updates, contacts and other useful and important information.

The magazine will be circulated to AACE members and other important industry and media contacts.

Annual Directory

Who's Who In Children's Entertainment™ will be an annual directory of AACE members. It will be distributed free of charge to producers, casting directors, booking agencies, managers, publishers, and other appropriate entertainment companies.

The directory's editorial and advertising content will provide an opportunity for AACE members to promote themselves to the entertainment industry at large.



Industry Education

AACE will work with such organizations as the National Association of Television Programming Executives and The Association of Independent Television Stations to help their members create and distribute quality programming for children.

AACE will also support its members in reaching wider audiences by producing showcases to bring together performers, producers, writers, and casting and booking agents.

Public Service

AACE will demonstrate the industry's commitment to children by establishing public service and outreach programs, especially to children in need.

Such programs might include personal visits to children in hospitals, schools, theaters, parks and playgrounds throughout the country.

Members will be encouraged to use their talents to tackle such problems as literacy, poverty, and child and drug abuse.

Fundraising events will support the work of AACE, and provide assistance to children's charities worldwide.

Annual Conference

AACE's annual conference will be an opportunity for members to learn about ever-changing technology, discuss business and social trends in children's entertainment, and otherwise improve their business and creative skills.

Yes! I Want To Join AACE!

aace.

Enclosed is my tax-deductible check for \$100.

Send me my membership kit and keep me informed on the important work to be done.

☐ Please call on me to help with the following AACE projects

☐ I am interested in presenting/attending a seminar on:

Send your payment to: AACE
P.O. Box 1257, Cooper Station,
New York, NY 10276
For More Information, call
212-473-3348 or 201-328-0204

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